

About the Video

1. Oh oh oh oh...
Caught in a Bad Romance!
Oh oh oh oh...
Caught in a Bad Romance!

2. It's gotten ugly (45'')
- They passed the 15th
Still women have no right
Nor guarantee
To liberty
Child, health, wealth
Or property

3. Hey! We'll raise our banner (1')
- Across this land hey!
'Cause franchise isn't just
The right of a man
Universal
Yuh, yuh, yuh, it's universal!
Yuh, yuh, yuh, universal!

4. You know we don't want to (1'17'')
- Take freedoms from you
Just want our rights and nothing less

5. We cry for freedom
- Oh, hear our voice
And see we're equal to all men!
Oh oh oh oh...
We the whole people
Not just male citizens
Formed this most perfect Union!

6. Oh oh oh oh...
Caught in a Bad Romance!
Oh oh oh oh...
Caught in a Bad Romance!

7. Vo vo votes ah ah aah (1'56'')
- Whoa aa, won't ta aah
Stop ha, ooo la la
Til we have suffrage!

8. It is a horror (2'06'')
- A cruel design
That makes it criminal
a right that is mine
I want the vote

vote, vote, vote
I want to vote

9. Well, I think you're psycho (2' 21'')
I think that it's sick
I'm queen of my home, raise my babies
That's it
Don't need to vote
No, no, she don't want to vote!
No, no, no, don't want to vote

10. The rights of citizens (2' 37'')
Shall not be denied or abridged
(New legislation, baby!)
By the United States
On account of sex

11. We cry for freedom (2' 46'')
Oh hear our voice
And see we're equal to all men!
Oh oh oh oh...
We the whole people, not
Just male citizens
Formed this most perfect Union

12. Oh oh oh oh... (3')
Caught in a Bad Romance!
Oh oh oh oh...
Caught in a Bad Romance!

13. Vo vo votes ah ah (3' 18)
Whoa ah, won't ta ah
Stop ha, ooo la la
Til we have suffrage!

14. March, march, be courageous (3' 26'')
Fighting
For our rights we may just
Start greatness for the ages
Freedom it is contagious
March, march, be courageous
Fighting
For our rights we may just
Start greatness for the ages
Remember the ladies

15. Not to be above (3' 43'')
but equal to all men
We only ask to be
Part of this Union!

Comme dirait le Français:
c'est Démocratie!
Permettez-moi participer!*

16. I'm a citizen (3'59'')
Of this nation!
An American!
I want suffrage! And independence!

17. We cry for freedom (4'15'')
Oh, hear our voice
And see we're equal to all men!
Oh oh oh oh...
We the whole people, not
Just male citizens
Formed this most perfect Union!

18. Oh oh oh oh... (4'30'')
I want to wear pants!
Caught in a Bad Romance
I want my suffrage!
Oh oh oh oh...
And independence!
Caught in a Bad Romance!

19. Vo vo votes ah ah (4'45'')
Woah ah, won't ta ah
Stop ha, ooo la la
Now we have suffrage!

**As the French would say:
This is democracy! Let me participate!*

Glossary of Terms

- 19th Amendment: The amendment to the U.S. Constitution that granted women the right to vote, passed in 1919 and ratified in 1920
- Anti-Suffrage: The counter movement which opposed giving women the right to vote
- Franchise: A privilege, right, or authorization granted by the government
- Hobble Skirt: A style of skirt popular in the early 1900s characterized by a hemline so narrow that it severely restricted the wearer's stride
- Hunger Strike: The act of fasting in non-violent protest
- National Women's Party (NWP): A political organization founded by Alice Paul in 1916 whose primary mission was a federal constitutional amendment and was known for using radical tactics

- Silent Sentinels: A term coined by Harriot Stanton Blatch, daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, to describe the group of women who protested silently outside the White House for six days a week from 1917 to 1919

QUESTIONS

1. What can you read at the beginning of the video, in 28-29th seconds? What does it stand for? (you can check the glossary above)

2. How are women dressed in the video? Why? What are the colours of the ribbon they wear on their chest, and what do they stand for? What colour is different in British suffragettes?

3. In verse number 2 they say "It's gotten ugly, they passed the 15th". It refers to the 15th Amendment to the Constitution.

- What was this Amendment about?

- How did this Amendment affect women?

- Who represents the woman who sings and seems to be in a mental hospital?

- In the same verse we can hear "still women have no right, nor guarantee, to liberty, child, health, wealth or property". Make sentences about what women weren't allowed to do in this period, taking into account this verse and what you've learnt about this period.

4. In verse 3 we can listen: "We'll raise our banner across this land" Write down what is written in the banners we can see in the video (+/- 2')

Search for more pictures with suffragettes' banners and translate what they say.

5. In verses 4-7, what are the women doing? What social class do they belong to? What do you think the scenes 1'30''-1'50'' represent?

6. What does the scene at the mental hospital, from 1'46''-1'55'', represent and why? Find out about how imprisoned suffragettes behaved and how their hunger strikes were approached by the government. Find out what is the so-called "Cat and Mouse Act"

Look for newspapers' information, pictures and drawings about this issue. Make an exhibition with the one you like best to show your school mates.

7. In verses 7-8, women march with banners in front of the White House while some politicians observe them. Check the glossary of terms above, and choose the one which suits best to this scene. Who represents the old man in glasses and what's his name?

8. What is it written in the woman's dress in scene 2'21'', verse 9? Which term of the glossary above fits this scene? What are the arguments those people use to

deny women the right to vote? Find out about “the angel in the house” 19th century ideology.

9. In verse 10 we hear what Alice Paul demand in the 19th Amendment. Compare what she says with the 15th Amendment passed many years before.

10. From verse 10 onward we can see how the 19th Amendment was passed by only one vote.

What do red rose senators vote? And yellow rose senators?

11. The deciding vote was cast by twenty-four year-old Harry Burn, the youngest member of the assembly.

-What colour is his rose and what is he expected to vote according to it?

-What did he actually vote for?

Harry Burn changed his vote after receiving a telegram. You can read the telegram in the video, since he keeps it in his pocket jacket.

What did this telegram say? Who sent it to him?

How many years did it take suffragettes to get women the right to vote?

12. In verse 14 we hear “march,march”,which is something suffragettes did for decades. Search for pictures of these marches and put them in some visible place at your highschool.

The same verse ends with the sentence “remember the ladies”. Who wrote this sentence in a letter to her husband and what was she demanding?

13. In verse 18 we can hear “the mother” saying: “I want to wear pants”.

What do the pants symbolize in this context? Find out more about women wearing trousers in the Western world after 1900.

-How many girls are wearing trousers today in your class? Why do you think they are so many?

- What does the idiom “wear the pants” mean and why can it be considered a sexist idiom?

14. Analyze the last scene of the video, 4’45’’. What’s the meaning of it?

15. To pass the 19th Amendment didn’t mean that men and women were finally equal under the law. Find out about “The Equal Rights Amendment” and tell why was it known as “Lucretia Mott Amendment” and/or “Alice Paul Amendment”

TEXTS

1- It is often said that the way you dress says something about you and your beliefs, and the Suffragettes of the early 1900s are certainly an example of this. Their fashion became a huge part of the political statement itself.

Suffragettes' clothes were chosen to be regarded as feminine, often wearing soft blouses and white skirts. The aim was to counter the stereotypes put forward by their opponents who constantly made remarks that alluded to the female activists being mannish or shrieking hysterics.

Colour symbology was also used to showcase a women's alliance to the movement, and the careful choice of colours came to represent their mission!

The suffragette slogan was 'Give Women the Vote'. Therefore the colours **Green**, **White** and **Violet** were adopted. Each colour symbolised an aspect of the movement: Green represented hope, White stood for purity and Violet for freedom and dignity.

2- The 15th Amendment to the Constitution granted African American men the right to vote by declaring that the "right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Although ratified on February 3, 1870, the promise of the 15th Amendment would not be fully realized for almost a century.

3- Hunger striking has long been recognised as a non-violent form of protest, and was first used by imprisoned suffragettes in 1909.

When Suffragettes went to prison – and they could be arrested and sent to prison for quite trivial offenses – they went to prison and said: 'We are political prisoners. We demand special treatment.' These were rights, which had been fought for and won, in the 19th Century. So they said: 'We want special prison cells. We want to wear our own clothes. We want freedom of association. We want the rights of political prisoners. We're not asking for anything new, this has been established.'

However, the authorities did not want to accept that this was a political campaign. They did not want to give them the political status that they were demanding. And so they said: 'No, you are ordinary, common criminals and you can be treated in this particular way,' which involved prison food, prison clothing, and no privileges. In response to this, the Suffragettes said: 'Okay, we're going to demand our political rights, and we're going to go on hunger strikes. We're not going to take any food.' Now, the authorities at first said, 'Okay.' And they released them early from their prison sentences. Public opinion is not behind them on this. They say: 'Well, you've got convicted criminals in prison, you're letting them go. This will not do.'

"Then the government starts force-feeding. Force-feeding was done in three different ways.

- A Suffragette was taken out of her cell, was taken to the hospital ward of the prison. She was held down and often food was just pushed into her mouth, but she could spit

it out. So the next two measures were the ones that were most used. One was the nasal tube. The nasal tube was where liquid food was poured down a funnel and gradually food trickles down into the back of the throat. Sylvia Pankhurst was rather unusual in the sense that she went on hunger, thirst, and sleep strikes. She wouldn't eat, she wouldn't drink, and she wouldn't go to sleep. She just paced her cell continuously. Of course her health broke down.

We know that it had a psychological impact on women. Some women's health suffered quite a major breakdown. Very often the food went down the wrong way and the lungs filled with food, and there was pleurisy and pneumonia. There is a serious health risk, apart from the psychological damage, that this kind of experience could have on women."

4- The popular Victorian image of the ideal wife/woman came to be "the Angel in the House"; she was expected to be devoted and submissive to her husband. The Angel was passive and powerless, meek, charming, graceful, sympathetic, self-sacrificing, pious, and above all--pure. The phrase "Angel in the House" comes from the title of an immensely popular poem by Coventry Patmore, in which he holds his angel-wife up as a model for all women.

For Virginia Woolf, the repressive ideal of women represented by the Angel in the House was still so potent in 1931, that she wrote, "Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer.

5- In a letter dated March 31, 1776, Abigail Adams writes to her husband, John Adams, urging him and the other members of the Continental Congress not to forget about the nation's women when fighting for America's independence from Great Britain.

The future First Lady wrote in part, "I long to hear that you have declared an independency. And, by the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."

Nearly 150 years before the House of Representatives voted to pass the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote, Adams letter was a private first step in the fight for equal rights for women.

6- In 1917, in response to public outcry about the prison abuse of American suffragists, President Wilson reversed his position and announced his support for a suffrage amendment, calling it a "war measure."

In 1919, both the House and Senate passed the 19th Amendment and the battle for state ratification commenced. Three-fourths of the states were needed to ratify the amendment. The battle for ratification came down to the state of Tennessee in the summer of 1920; if a majority of the state legislature voted for the amendment, it

would become law. The deciding vote was cast twenty-four year-old Harry Burn, the youngest member of the Tennessee assembly. Originally intending to vote “no,” Burn changed his vote after receiving a telegram from his mother asking him to support women’s suffrage. On August 18, 1920, Tennessee ratified the 19th Amendment. Six days later, Secretary of State Colby certified the ratification, and, with the stroke of his pen, American women gained the right to vote after a seventy-two year battle. August 26th is now celebrated as Women’s Equality Day in the United States.

7- While many suffragists left public life and activism after the 19th Amendment was enacted, Alice Paul believed the true battle for equality had yet to be won. In 1923, on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention, Paul announced that she would be working for a new constitutional amendment, one she authored and called the “Lucretia Mott Amendment.” This amendment called for absolute equality stating, “Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction.” The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was introduced in every session of Congress from 1923 until it passed in 1972. During the 1940s, both the Republicans and Democrats added the ERA to their party platforms. In 1943, the ERA was rewritten and dubbed the “Alice Paul Amendment.” The new amendment read, “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.”